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->From the Editor’s Keyboard "Saying it like it is!"
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Video game violence, the saga is renewed. Why is it that gun opponents will attempt to use video games, specifically those with violence, to try and "prove" that it has a negative effect on society and is the cause of gun-related violence in our society? Talk about grasping at straws!

It’s an age-old argument. There are guns in the real world; there are guns in the gaming world. Henceforth, the two must be related. Wrong. As I’ve said numerous times over the years, video games are not real. Correlation between the two does not create facts, only speculation. Have some wackos who have used guns in a violent manner also played violent video games some time in their past? I’m sure that the answer is yes. So what! That doesn’t make video games the villain; it’s a coincidence.

It’s time to end this foolishness, and hopefully the video game industry representatives will succeed in convincing Washington that their vigilante attitudes are misplaced.

Until next time...

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->In This Week’s Gaming Section - In Gun Debate, Video Game Industry Defends Itself!
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Razer Edge Hands-On: A Modular Tablet for PC Gamers!

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->A-ONE’s Game Console Industry News - The Latest Gaming News!
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In Gun Debate, Video Game Industry Defends Itself

The video game industry, blamed by some for fostering a culture of violence, defended its practices Friday at a White House meeting exploring how to prevent horrific shootings like the recent Connecticut elementary school massacre.

Vice President Joe Biden, wrapping up three days of wide-ranging talks on gun violence prevention, said the meeting was an effort to understand whether the U.S. was undergoing a "coarsening of our culture."

"I come to this meeting with no judgment. You all know the judgments other people have made," Biden said at the opening of a two-hour discussion. "We're looking for help."

The gaming industry says that violent crime, particularly among the young, has fallen since the early 1990s while video games have increased in popularity.

There are conflicting studies on the impact of video games and other screen violence. Some conclude that video games can desensitize people to real-world violence or temporarily quiet part of the brain that governs impulse control. Other studies have concluded there is no lasting effect.

Biden is expected to suggest ways to address violence in video games, movies and on television when he sends President Barack Obama a package of recommendations for curbing gun violence Tuesday. The proposals are expected to include calls for universal background checks and bans on assault weapons and high-capacity ammunition magazines.

Obama appointed Biden to lead a gun violence task force after last month's shooting at a Newtown, Conn., elementary school that left 20 children and six educators dead.

Gun-safety activists were coalescing around expanded background checks as a key goal for the vice president's task force. Some advocates said it may be more politically realistic and even more effective as policy than reinstating a ban on assault weapons.

The Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence said some 40 percent of gun sales happen with no background checks, such as at gun shows and by private sellers over the Internet or through classified ads.

"Our top policy priority is closing the massive hole in the background check system," the group said.

While not backing off support for an assault weapons ban, some advocates said there could be broader political support for increasing background checks, in part because that could actually increase business for retailers and licensed gun dealers who have access to the federal background check system.

"The truth is that an assault weapons ban is a very important part of the solution and it is also much tougher to pass," said Mark Glaze, director of Mayors Against Illegal Guns.

Restrictions on high-capacity ammunition magazines are also seen by some

as an easier lift politically than banning assault weapons.

The National Rifle Association adamantly opposes universal background checks, as well as bans on assault weapons and high-capacity magazines all measures that would require congressional approval. The NRA and other pro-gun groups contend that a culture that glamorizes violence bears more responsibility for mass shootings than access to a wide range of weapons and ammunition.

In a 2009 report, the American Academy of Pediatrics declared, "The evidence is now clear and convincing: Media violence is one of the causal factors of real-life violence and aggression."

The report focused on all types of media violence. But for video games in particular, the pediatricians cited studies that found high exposure to violent ones increased physical aggression at least in the short term, and warned that they allow people to rehearse violent acts. On the other hand, it said friendly video games could promote good behavior.

A wide spectrum of the video game industry was represented at the meeting with the vice president, including the makers of violent war video games like "Call of Duty" and "Medal of Honor" and a representative from the Entertainment Software Ratings Board, which sets age ratings that on every video game package released in the United States.

The vice president met Thursday with representatives from the entertainment industry, including Motion Picture Association of America and the National Cable & Telecommunications Association. In a joint statement after the meeting, a half-dozen said they "look forward to doing our part to seek meaningful solutions" but offered no specifics.

Biden, hinting at other possible recommendations to the president, said he is interested in technology that would keep a gun from being fired by anyone other than the person who bought it. He said such technology may have curtailed what happened last month in Connecticut, where the shooter used guns purchased by his mother.

The vice president has also discussed making gun trafficking a felony, a step Obama can take through executive action. And he is expected to make recommendations for improving mental health care and school safety.

"We know this is a complex problem," Biden said. "We know there’s no single answer."

The president plans to push for the new measures in his State of the Union address, scheduled for Feb. 12.

Gaming Association Publishes Open Letter to Joe Biden

In response to the tragic shooting at an elementary school in Newtown, Connecticut, American citizens and politicians alike have been searching for answers. Some eyes have fallen squarely on the entertainment industries including the gaming realm culminating in representatives of the gaming industry agreeing to meet with Vice President Joe Biden in an ongoing conversation about the culture of guns and violence in the United States.

In response, the ECA the Entertainment Consumer Association - released an open letter to the Vice President entitled Policy Considerations post-Newtown, CT School Shooting .

Below is part of the letter penned by ECA s VP and General Counsel Jennifer Mercurio. (You can see the full letter here.)

With the recent tragedy on everyone s minds, some people are looking for a cause and culprit other than the shooter. Unfortunately some are blaming media, including video games, for violent behavior in individuals. We know this isn t the case; banning or regulating media content even more won t solve the issue.

Studies show that media does not cause violence. Christopher J. Ferguson, Chair of Texas A&M International University s Department of Psychology & Communication, has shown through his work that there s no link between violent video games and real world violence like mass shooting, bullying or youth aggression. Others work, including federally funded studies, all agree.

Media consumption has risen as the number of violent crimes has dropped. While video game sales have increased, violent crime has been steadily decreasing according to FBI statistics. In 2011, video game sales increased to over $27 billion dollars and violent crimes nationwide have decreased 3.8% from 2010. Since 2002, violent crime has decreased 15.5%. This is all during the time when games like Call of Duty and Halo have dominated sales.

At the same time, federal courts including the Supreme Court have routinely held that government regulation of media, including video games, is unconstitutional. Funding more studies or passing laws that then get fought in courts costs taxpayers millions of dollars.

It is in your power to guide this conversation and not blame entertainment media.

For more on the recent discussions concerning violence in video games, see our recent editorial on gaming violence, as well as a compelling Gamasutra editorial on the subject, and our rebuttal.

Update: The original article originally (and erroneously) stated that the ECA represents publishers and developers in the gaming industry. This is incorrect (the ECA, as its name states, is a consumer advocacy group, with the ESA representing the business side). The article has been updated to reflect the change.

Razer Edge Hands-On: A Modular Tablet for PC Gamers

For north of $1,500, the Razer Edge could be your next tablet, game console, laptop and desktop and a way to play high-end PC games from pretty much anywhere.

Razer, which has dabbled in making its own PCs but is mostly known for gaming peripherals, has spent the last year refining its concept for a powerful gaming tablet. We first got a glimpse of this concept, formerly dubbed Project Fiona, at CES 2012, when Razer showed off a tablet with game control handles attached to its sides. The idea was to bring

portability to the kinds of games people play at home, like Call of Duty and Skyrim. The Razer Edge is the end result of Razer s experiments.

We wanted something that wasn t Angry Birds, said Min-Liang Tan, Razer s CEO, co-founder and creative director.

The Edge, which starts at $1,000, is a 10.1-inch Windows 8 tablet that s twice as thick as Apple s iPad, and 25 percent heavier, but much more powerful. Inside, Razer s managed to pack an Intel Core i5 processor, an Nvidia GT640M graphics card, 4 GB of RAM and a 64 GB solid state drive. For players who need even more power, there s a $1,300 Pro version with a Core i7 processor, 8 GB of RAM and either a 128 GB or 256 GB solid state drive.

But the tablet alone isn t the whole story. The Razer Edge is a modular device, able to take on different forms through extra peripherals. Foremost, there s a $250 gaming controller, which wraps around the tablet and provides a pair of grips on either side, each with their own thumbsticks, triggers and buttons. Also, a $100 docking station provides HDMI output and three USB ports for external controllers, turning the Razer Edge into a desktop PC or living room game console. In the third quarter, Razer will sell a $200 keyboard dock, which collapses shut like a laptop.

The whole package isn t cheap, but then again most gaming laptops aren t, and the whole point of the Razer Edge is that it s a jack of all trades. The question is whether this one device is good enough to stand in for all the others.

In my hands-on time, the Razer Edge certainly performed well enough with high-end games, humming along at 60 frames per second in 1080p resolution while I played Dishonored and Dirt Showdown. That framerate didn t waver when mirrored to an external monitor while the game continued to play on the tablet s display. If you re a console gamer, the Razer Edge will seem like a huge improvement over the current crop of systems (which are now six to seven years old), but it hardly seems compromised as a PC gaming machine, either.

There is one big drawback, though: Due to the processing power that high-end PC games demand, the Razer Edge will only get about an hour of battery life while gaming. Razer will sell a $69 extended battery, which snaps into either the keyboard dock or game controller and doubles the battery life, but even then you re only looking at about two hours of game time. Battery life will likely be much better for non-gaming uses, but Razer didn t have official details yet.

My other issue was that the gaming controller felt somewhat unnatural to hold, at least compared to the controllers I m used to. It seemed like my thumbs had to stretch pretty far to use the thumbsticks while also keeping the face buttons within reach, and the weight of the tablet made it tricky to hold without leaning back and resting it on my lap. Since I only had a few minutes with the device, I don t want to judge it too harshly, because it might just take some getting used to. It just didn t seem like a perfect fit right away.

Despite those concerns, I m really impressed with what Razer has done. This is exactly the kind of device that Windows 8 makes possible, and merely the idea of a portable, fully-powered game console had me pondering how much money was left in my bank account. Tan said Razer will upgrade and build on the Edge as long as there s enough interest. I hope there is,

because even if the first iteration of the Edge isn t perfect, the idea is a winner.

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A-ONE's Headline News
The Latest in Computer Technology News
Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

EU Lawmakers Seek To Limit Use of Data by Internet Firms

Internet companies such as Facebook and Google may have to get more permission to use information if European Union lawmakers give users more control over their personal data.

EU lawmakers want to limit companies' ability to use and sell data, such as internet browsing habits, to advertising companies, especially when people are unaware their data is being used in such a way.

"Users must be informed about what happens with their data," said Jan Philipp Albrecht, a German Member of the European Parliament who is driving the reform. "And they must be able to consciously agree to data processing - or reject it."

Facebook and Google, who were among the first to profit from users' data, have been lobbying against the curbs. Other data-reliant sectors such as health services, rail and smart-meter makers have also voiced concerns.

Albrecht, a Green politician, plans to announce on Wednesday a plan to make sure users of search engines and social networks can control how much of their data is sold to advertisers.

A report he produced, which was seen by Reuters, builds on a proposal announced by the European Commission last January for tougher data protection.

The European Parliament, the Commission and the bloc's 27 countries will seek an agreement on the rules in coming months.

Internet companies worry it will have a chilling effect on a thriving business.

"We are concerned that some aspects of the report do not support a flourishing European digital single market and the reality of innovation on the internet," Erika Mann, head of EU policy for Facebook, said.

The digital market was inescapably global in nature, and included important partners in the United States, she said.

The amount of online data collected and sold has grown rapidly. Currently, over 60 hours of YouTube content is uploaded every minute.

U.S. privacy advocates estimate a Facebook user can make $10 a year for

the company by clicking on ads. At last count, the company said it had over 1 billion users.

Albrecht also said national authorities might be allowed to levy fines ranging from 0.5-2.0 percent of annual turnover for compromising customer data - which could mean losing or divulging the data.

However, high-ranking politicians in the European parliament are lobbying for the maximum fine to be no more than 1 percent of turnover, saying anything higher could push big data offshore. Albrecht's final report will voted on in April.

The push to regulate use of customer data comes as consumers appear to be turning against the practice. In December, image-editing and hosting application Instagram dropped an idea to sell users' photos to advertisers after it lost almost a quarter of its users within a week of announcing the plan.

Privacy lobbyists say companies do not take sufficient consideration of users' privacy concerns.

"They may do so if they feel that their reasons for doing so are more compelling than the individual's right to privacy," said Joe McNamee, a privacy advocate in Brussels.

Albrecht said there would be exceptions in his proposed curbs. For example, a company would still be able to send junk mail to a user based on data it had gathered itself.

EU Police Agency Opens Unit To Tackle Cybercrime

The European Union's police coordination agency opened a new cybercrime unit Friday to combat online offenses from banking fraud to peddling images of child sex abuse.

But as the European Cybercrime Centre, or EC3, formally opened its doors at Europol's Hague headquarters, European Home Affairs Commissioner Cecilia Malmstrom conceded it will be playing catch-up with organized crime gangs reveling in a "Golden Age" of cybercrime.

Online criminals, she said, "are ahead of us when it comes to imagination and cooperation."

Europol is fighting back with experts huddled around computer screens in blue-lit "labs," monitoring internet traffic and able to retrieve data users believe they have deleted from their cell phone or computer hard disks.

The agency says online payment card fraud generates an estimated 1.5 billion ($2 billion) a year, while recent international investigations into pedophiles trafficking child abuse images on the Internet have led to hundreds of arrests worldwide.

Europol expert Valerio Papajorgji said the new center will chase criminals who attempt to conceal their activities in parts of the Internet and online networks not generally accessed by regular users or search engines known as the "deep web" and "darknet."

It also will track and tackle malicious software used to steal personal and banking information from people’s computers and empty their online accounts.

Europol Director Rob Wainwright called the establishment of the center a milestone in Europe’s fight against crime and efforts to deny criminals "the cyberspace and opportunity they are currently exploiting to harm governments, businesses and citizens."

The European center aims to cooperate with other such agencies around the world, and Wainwright signed a letter of intent on cooperation with John Morton, director of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency, which has a long-established cybercrime unit known as C3.

Morton said cross-border teamwork is key to tackling cybercrime, which knows no borders.

"This level of international cooperation is not just an ideal or something to be wished for but rather a necessity," he said at the opening ceremony in The Hague.

"You literally cannot investigate and prosecute these cases any more the large-scale ones over the Internet without very strong international cooperation."

Microsoft Determines Windows RT Jailbreak Poses No Security Threat

On Sunday, reports surfaced that the Windows RT operating system had been jailbroken to allow the execution of unsigned ARM desktop applications, and Microsoft quickly confirmed it was investigating the claims. The company has now issued a statement saying that it does not consider the findings to be part of a security vulnerability, and that the circumvention method may not be available for long.

On the one hand, Microsoft is saying there is no security hole that needs to be plugged. On the other hand, the company is admitting this is an issue that it may want to address in the future.

Here is the full statement:

> The scenario outlined is not a security vulnerability and does not pose a threat to Windows RT users. The mechanism described is not something the average user could, or reasonably would, leverage, as it requires local access to a system, local administration rights and a debugger in order to work. In addition, the Windows Store is the only supported method for customers to install applications for Windows RT. There are mechanisms in place to scan for security threats and help ensure apps from the Store are legitimate and can be acquired and used with confidence.
>
> We applaud the ingenuity of the folks who worked this out and the hard work they did to document it. We ll not guarantee these approaches will be there in future releases.

The security researcher being applauded is clrokr, who developed the workaround for allowing desktop applications to run on Microsoft s

ARM-based OS. As we outlined earlier today, however, it s a rather limited exploit since the setting needs to be changed each time the PC boots up, and it only works for unsigned ARM desktop apps.

This is the main reason Microsoft says it s not a security threat: the specific value that needs to be changed can t be permanently altered on devices enabled with Secure Boot. It has to be modified in memory when the OS is already running, and that s exactly what clrokr figured out how to do, after tracking down the right value in the Windows RT kernel.

While the hack is limited, it still does open up possibilities for a homebrew scene full of ARM desktop apps for Windows RT and thus the Microsoft Surface. Right now, only technically-savvy users will be able to reproduce clrokr s method, but assuming Microsoft doesn t issue a patch (and its statement is open-ended enough that this may happen), most will be able to do it once software that does it for them is available.

Next-Generation iPad, iPad Mini Tablets Reportedly Due in March

Anyone holding off on buying an iPad mini because it doesn t have a Retina display might not have to wait much longer. Topeka Capital analyst Brian White sent out a research note on Friday claiming that Apple plans to release both a fifth-generation iPad and a second-generation iPad mini this March. White said that unnamed sources at the Consumer Electronics Show indicated that the iPad 5 is expected to be lighter and thinner than the iPad 4 that was released in October, while the form factor of the iPad mini should be similar to the first generation iPad mini that debuted in October. White didn t mention whether the new iPad mini would have an upgraded display, although previous rumors have indicated that Apple plans to use Retina displays supplied by AU Optronics for the next version of its 8-inch tablet.

Why 2013 Could Be The Year of The Phablet

Few expected Samsung would spark a global revolution last year when it unleashed its oversized Galaxy Note phablet. But now that the Note has proven to be a hit, electronics companies around the world are apparently scrambling to steal Samsung s thunder by manufacturing their own giant smartphones. Strategy Analytics executive director Neil Mawston tells Reuters that he expects 2013 to be the Year of the Phablet, with companies such as TCL Communications (2618) Alcatel One Touch brand, ZTE and Huawei already bringing their own Note-like devices to the Consumer Electronics Show this week. The big reason that phablets have become so popular, ABI Research analyst Joshua Flood tells Reuters, is that voice calls are simply much less important to users than having a large, attractive screen they can use to read and watch videos. Or as Flood puts it, smaller was better until phones got smart, became visual.

Hands On With the First Tegra 4-Powered Tablet

It was expected, but still impressive. Nvidia unveiled its quad-core Tegra

4 mobile processor at CES 2013, and many products with the next-generation chip are already planned. One of them was a the show: The 10.1-inch model in Vizio’s new Android tablets, and I got a little one-on-one time with it.

The sample I checked out was a prototype. The finishing wasn’t final, but the screen and software were pretty much final. The screen, by the way, is a 2,560 x 1,600 display, comparable with Google’s Nexus 10. The software is close to pure Android 4.1 "Jelly Bean," mirroring Vizio’s approach with its Windows 8 machines: Getting rid of the bloatware.

The tablet (no name yet) is relatively light, noticeably less hefty than an iPad. The screen looks great, rendering retina-resolution photos with amazing clarity. Droplets on a petal of a rose, for example, had excellent texture, and you could see the details of the light reflected in each one.

Have you ever had that experience on a tablet or phone of flipping too fast through photos that the screen can’t keep up? Didn’t happen at all on the Vizio tablet. Every pic slid in and appeared instantaneously or close to it.

Videos look good, too, and, like photos, playback begins just as you tap the play button. Graphics-intensive websites load fast, on par with the iPad 4.

There weren’t any games or benchmarks loaded on the tablet, so I couldn’t really give Vizio’s 10-inch tablet a thorough workout, but we’re looking forward to checking it out when it’s released, scheduled for this summer (no prices yet). Preliminary specs call for 32GB of storage, a 5MP camera in back and a 1.3MP one in back, and the micro trifecta of HDMI, USB and SD card ports.

The tablet doesn’t have a name yet, and it’s joined by a 7-inch model, which is closer to final product. That one will pack Tegra 3 and 16GB of storage as well as have a 1,280 x 800 screen.

Virtual Reality Comes to Home Computers in 3D

A computer mouse that dreamed of flying might evolve into something like the Leonar3Do"bird" that can control virtual environments in 3D.

The virtual reality system requires 3D glasses, the 3D bird controller and a screen equipped with three peripheral sensors. Such hardware has paved the way for newly-announced educational software under the Leonar3Do company’s Vimensio brand software that can train students to learn the names of organs in biology or model the solar system’s planets.

"You could put this on any computer, any laptop and have a virtual workspace environment," said Roland Manyai, director of marketing, sales and business development for Leonar3Do.

The Leonar3Do technology works for more than just classroom education and games. Another company used the Vimensio software to make a driving practice simulator. A physician even used the technology to create a facial reconstruction program to plan for real-life surgeries.

A demo station at the Startup Debut event of CES 2013 allowed

TechNewsDaily to play with a virtual sphere. The 3D glasses tracked changes in the view of the virtual environment whenever the wearer turned his or her head.

The bird controller has two buttons like a typical computer mouse. In the sphere demo, pressing the small button grabbed the entire sphere. Clicking the big button allowed for tunneling inside the sphere or creating new branches or arms extending outward from the sphere.

If the bird controller still sounds strange, Leonar3Do also announced a smartphone app that turns mobile devices into controllers as well. People who crave the virtual experience in a bigger setting can also use 3D TVs rather than their laptops.

Leonar3Do currently has two main flavors of its Vimensio software scheduled for sale in early 2013. The free Vimensio Play software is for people who want to use the 3D virtual programs available through a new online 3D app store. By comparison, the Vimensio Edit program starts at about $500 and comes in two flavors of its own for both non-programmers and people who know how to code.

The virtual reality hardware can cost about $550 in all, but a combined hardware and software package may run the price up to $1,500. Certain programs such as the driving simulator would be more expensive.

But the 3D fun does not have to remain in virtual reality. Any digital 3D models created through the Vimensio software could also become physical objects through 3D printers devices that can build up objects layer-by-layer based on digital blueprints.

Why is Facebook Charging $100 for Messages?

A little digging by Mashable has turned up a strange new initiative from Facebook. While you can already send a message for free to a friend or a friend of a friend the ubiquitous social network is now giving you the option to pay a hefty $100 to send a message directly to a total stranger’s inbox. Without ponying up the cash, your message goes to the dreaded "other folder," a.k.a. "Facebook’s dumping ground for all messages it guesses you won’t want to read urgently," where it will likely be completely overlooked. (By the way, have you checked your "other" folder recently? Do so with caution.)

In December, Facebook announced it would be testing this pay-to-message feature, but for a much lower fee of just $1. Even that was met with mixed reviews. But bloggers discovered the new fee when testing a message to the founder himself, Mark Zuckerberg. And the fee prompt can be replicated with other popular accounts. The fee seems to jump from $1 to $100 when the person you’re messaging has a whole bunch of followers, or is a well-known public figure.

In a statement, a Facebook spokesperson says, "We are testing some extreme price points to see what works to filter spam." In other words, the fee is an attempt to discourage people from sending annoying messages to people they don’t know. "But, it could also be seen as Facebook letting people pay to spam your inbox," notes Josh Wolford at Web Pro News.

It will be interesting to see how long these fees stay in place, and who,

if anyone, actually pays them.

’Facebook Dead’: How to ’Kill’ Your Friends

Rusty Foster discovered he was dead last week, at least according to Facebook. He had been locked out of his account, which had been turned into a "memorial page," because someone had reported the Maine man as deceased to the social media site.

He tweeted Thursday, "Facebook thinks I’m dead. I’m tempted to just let it," then "Did you know that you can report any of your Facebook friends dead & Facebook will lock them out of their account with no evidence needed?"

As one of Foster’s friends discovered, it doesn’t take much to convince Facebook that somebody is dead. By simply going to the " Memorialization Request" page and filling out a form, including a link to an obituary, anybody can take someone else off Facebook.

The obituary needs to have the same name (or at least a close name), but doesn’t need to match any other details on the profile. The obituary Foster’s friend used to prove Foster’s death was for a man who was born in 1924 and died in 2011 in a different state than the one Foster lists on Facebook as his home state.

Foster, 36, said he never got any notification his account was going to be locked, and only discovered it when he attempted to log in. He filled out a form to report the error, and received a response that began with "We are very sorry to hear about your loss."

More than a full day later, Foster’s account still hadn’t been unlocked. Buzzfeed, tipped off by Foster, posted an article in which one editor "killed" another editor, John Herrman, on Facebook. According to the article, about an hour after Herrman reported the error to Facebook, his profile was reactivated. About an hour after that, 27 hours after Foster first reported his erroneous death, he was "resurrected" by Facebook and allowed back into his account.

Foster does not know the total amount of time he was "Facebook dead." He told ABC that nothing was different with his account when he logged back in, only that some of his friends had a little fun with his status.

"The only thing that happened was some of my friends posted little mock-eulogies for me, because word got around that I was locked out, due to a temporary case of death," Foster wrote in an email with the subject line, "Rusty, the Facebook zombie."

When pages are memorialized, they are removed from sidebars, timelines and friend suggestions and searches. This is likely to prevent people from seeing their friends who have died pop up on their newsfeed, and to prevent people from hacking into the accounts of dead people.

Foster said he understands the position Facebook is in when it comes to the death of one of its users, but believes there are better options for the social media site.

"There ought to be an email sent to the account’s email address informing

it that the account has been reported dead and providing a link or something to dispute the report before any action is taken," Foster wrote.

Foster said the most frustrating part was not being able to get into his account to "click the 'I'm not dead' button that should also be there."

This has apparently been the same "memorialization" process since at least 2009, when another user took to his personal blog to write about his experience of being "Facebook dead." In his case, the obituary his friend used to have him declared dead wasn't even close to his real name. Instead, the man who performed the funeral services had a similar name.

In a statement to ABC News, Facebook said the system is in place in order to respect the privacy of the deceased.

"We have designed the memorialization process to be effective for grieving families and friends, while still providing precautions to protect against either erroneous or malicious efforts to memorialize the account of someone who is not deceased," the statement reads. "We also provide an appeals process for the rare instances in which accounts are mistakenly reported or inadvertently memorialized."

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